

Oakland's community effort to revitalize its economy and preserve its historic past, the Town received a National Mainstreet Designation from the National Historical Trust in May of this year.

Another historically significant location in Oakland is the Church of the Presidents, built in 1868. Three United States Presidents, Grant, Harrison, and Cleveland, attended services there and preferred Garrett County to any other place for their vacations.

Today, Oakland and Garrett County are well known as one of the finest all-season resort areas, offering abundant sports activities including fishing, hiking, skiing—both alpine and cross-country—and boating. The natural beauty of this pristine area of our state led to Oakland's original name, "The Wilderness Shall Smile." In addition, the town of Oakland, with its large Victorian homes and beautiful tree-lined streets, enhance the appeal of this cool, mountainous retreat.

Oakland has faced its share of economic difficulties. The departure in 1996 of Bausch and Lomb, the largest employer in the area, dealt a severe blow. Nevertheless, Oakland faced the problem head-on and orchestrated an intense effort to recruit alternative employers. In April of this year, Simon Pearce, a premier glass maker and Vermont's largest tourism attraction, opened a factory just outside of Oakland. Through the inspired leadership of Mayor Asa McCain, the town of Oakland will continue to thrive and prosper well towards the Town's 200th anniversary.

Oakland is a model of community spirit and cooperation. The activities planned to commemorate the 150th anniversary exemplify the deep devotion of its residents to their community. I share the pride of Mayor McCain and all of Oakland's citizens in their Town's historic past and optimism for Oakland's continued success in the years to come.●

#### VET CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

● Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure to publicly acknowledge the five Vet Centers from around this country that are being recognized for their superior services as "Vet Centers of Excellence." While I am proud of the fine facilities located in California, Arizona, Georgia and West Virginia, the one I want to praise today is in my state of Vermont.

Vermont is very fortunate to have two Vet Centers—in fact we boast the first in the nation back in the days when the Readjustment Counseling Service (RCS) was just getting started with pilot sites strategically located around the country. The nation's first Vet Center, an excellent facility, was designed to help veterans in the Burlington, Vermont area.

The Vet Center we honor today opened in mid-1981 and is located in White River Junction, Vermont. It

serves veterans on both sides of the Connecticut River in Vermont and New Hampshire. The team leader, Tim Beebe, assesses their work modestly, saying "we are just doing our job." Maybe they don't understand the impact they have. This incredible staff go so far above their "job". They are caring, involved and understanding friends, devoted to offering a safe haven to those veterans suffering the emotional wear and tear of battle, often thirty years after leaving the service.

I am sure I don't need to remind my colleagues in Congress that the work being done at Vet Centers throughout the Country is enormously important. Over the years, the Vet Center program has been so successful in meeting the readjustment needs of Vietnam veterans that the VA Readjustment Counseling Service expanded the scope of their good work to veterans of all eras. This move was heartily endorsed by Congress and is now law. Long before this mandate, however, the White River Junction Vet Center subscribed to an open door policy to all veterans. Their message was simply put: "Welcome home—you are not alone."

Mr. President, I believe in the great work being done by Vet Centers everyday throughout this country. I also know, however, that a "Vet Center of Excellence" award is only given to the those centers that stand a little taller than the rest. The White River Junction Vet Center staff exemplifies excellence. I want to offer my warmest congratulations to this incredibly talented group of professionals and remind them that they are shining examples to their colleagues in the 206 Vet Centers around the United States.●

#### NORTH DAKOTA STOCKMEN'S ASSOCIATION

● Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, today, I would like to recognize a very important organization in my state, the North Dakota Stockmen's Association. I would also like to congratulate them on their 70th anniversary as an organization. Over the years, the North Dakota Stockmen's Association has been an invaluable asset to their members and to me. In particular, after 70 years of representing North Dakota family farmers and ranchers, the Stockmen have made great contributions to the cultural and economic heritage of North Dakota. Their successes have been accomplished through hard work and their consistent ability to produce the highest quality beef in the world.

Cattle provide an essential source of income for North Dakota farmers. Based on that fact alone, it is easy to understand the importance of the Stockmen's Association to my state's producers. While keeping the interests of cattle producers in the minds of elected officials, the members of this organization also provide valuable stewardship to the land, send their children to rural schools, support busi-

nesses, and help their neighbors through difficult weather and tough economic times. I would like to express my deep appreciation for their enduring efforts to support my state's communities, and again, I congratulate them for 70 years of service to the cattlemen of North Dakota.●

#### MICHAEL J. MCGINNIS

● Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Brother Michael J. McGinnis, who will be inducted as La Salle University's 28th President on September 24. Brother McGinnis was previously a member of La Salle's religion department, and for the past five years was president of Christian Brothers University in Memphis, Tennessee.

A native Philadelphian, Brother McGinnis joined the Christian Brothers University in 1965 and graduated Maxima Cum Laude from La Salle in 1970 with a degree in English. He obtained his Master's and Ph.D. in theology from the University of Notre Dame. While a graduate student at the University of Notre Dame, Brother McGinnis taught undergraduate courses in the Theology Department.

Brother McGinnis became assistant professor at Washington Theological Union from 1979 to 1984, and in 1984 joined the faculty at La Salle on a full-time basis, reaching the rank of full professor in 1993. Recognized for his leadership qualities, Brother McGinnis became Chair of La Salle's Religion Department in 1991 and the following year received the Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching.

During his tenure as President of Christian Brothers University, undergraduate enrollment and retention rates increased, a Master's of Education program was established, the Athletic Department joined the NCAA Division II Gulf South Conference, and the Center for Global Enterprise was founded. He also took an active role in the Memphis area community, serving on the boards of the Economic Club of Memphis, the Memphis chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, and the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art. Brother McGinnis also served on the Memphis Catholic Diocesan Development Committee and the board of the Christian Brothers High School.

Brother McGinnis has published numerous articles in scholarly journals, written chapters in religious books, and edited six volumes of the Christian Brothers' Spirituality Seminar Series. His book reviews have appeared in journals such as Horizons, Theological Studies, Journal of Ecumenical Studies, and Holistic Nursing Practice. His professional memberships include the Catholic Theological Society of America, American Academy of Religion, and College Theology Society.

Mr. President, Brother McGinnis has distinguished himself through his impressive academic and professional